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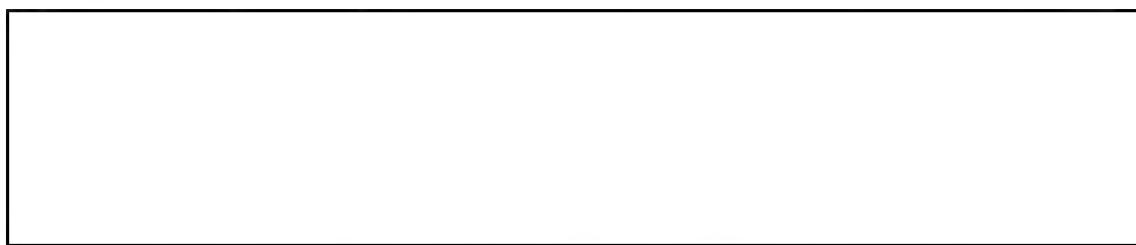
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Laos: The Communist buildup southwest of the Plaine des Jarres continues, but there has been no significant new fighting in the area.

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[redacted] enemy forces infiltrating southward from the Plaine may be turning the flank of the 5,500-man defense force deployed in the region between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung. [redacted] this might enable the Communists effectively to isolate the guerrilla redoubt at Sam Thong and drive a wedge between the Long Tieng garrison and the bulk of its defenders.

Government forces have reoccupied an important hilltop position four miles north of Long Tieng which was overrun by the enemy a few days ago. The reoccupation will facilitate guerrilla efforts to locate and harass enemy troop concentrations between Sam Thong and Long Tieng.

Meanwhile, the initial Communist reaction to Prime Minister Souvanna's letter to Pathet Lao leader Souphanouvong has been broadcast by the Laotian "patriotic neutralists." The broadcast, the full text of which is not yet available in Washington, denounced the proposals as a "trick" designed to avoid settlement of the Laotian problem. It cited the Pathet Lao's five-point proposal of 6 March as "a correct and reasonable solution to the Laotian question."

A more authoritative Communist statement should be forthcoming in the next few days. It may give some indication whether the Communists are willing to open talks despite the wide difference between their proposal and Souvanna's response. That response sidestepped the Communist demand for an unconditional bombing halt before negotiations or an end to the fighting and called for a total cease-fire and immediate withdrawal of "foreign forces."

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South Vietnam: Student protesters appear to be picking up new momentum and support.

The many Saigon University students who remain on strike have been joined in boycotting classes by college students in Hue and Can Tho. Some Saigon Buddhist students, previously restrained from involvement by university authorities, have also gone on strike, while students at several Saigon high schools have been demonstrating in sympathy.

There have recently been several minor clashes between students and Saigon police, but militant students have thus far been unable to make good on threats to intensify the protests.

The students have begun to focus on other, broader issues in addition to demanding the release of colleagues arrested by the government. They are calling for abolition of the military field court that is to try 21 students as Viet Cong agents next week. They are also objecting to arbitrary police tactics against students. Although some students reportedly believe the government has a good case, conviction of most of the students is likely further to aggravate the situation. The protesters may already be indignant over press allegations that the arrested students have been tortured.

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Jordan: The riots protesting Assistant Secretary Sisco's proposed visit could lead to renewed clashes between security forces and the fedayeen.

Peaceful student demonstrations on Tuesday, kept under control by fedayeen police, were followed by a larger one yesterday led by armed fedayeen. Two groups numbering about 800 attacked the US Embassy compound, inflicting property damage but no casualties.

Heavy Jordanian security forces surrounding the chancery area stood aside during the attack. The USIS cultural center some distance away was gutted later, but there were no injuries to US personnel.

King Husayn will probably urge that Sisco's visit proceed as scheduled on Friday. Cancellation would be touted as a considerable victory by the fedayeen and would once again call into question Husayn's position as master of his own house.

If further incidents occur after the assistant secretary's arrival, Husayn may be forced to choose between banning demonstrations or allowing them to be held only under strict government control. Either course could result in a renewal of last February's confrontation between the government and the fedayeen, although both sides probably wish to avoid a showdown at this time.

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Greece: Prime Minister Papadopoulos' efforts to implement the constitution are likely to be hampered by younger members of the revolutionary government.

He has announced that various articles suspended since the promulgation of the constitution in 1968 are now being put into force. Lifting the suspension of the article providing for habeas corpus and requiring warrants for most arrests has resulted in the release of 332 political prisoners this week. Censorship of the press was lifted last fall, and the censorship of books now has been abolished. Furthermore, the article permitting freedom of speech is in force.

The prime minister emphasized in his announcement, however, that martial law is still in effect. Moreover, the articles concerning the formation of political parties and elections remain suspended.

Many younger but influential members of the government see liberalization as a threat to their own power, and will continue to urge repression of all opposition to the revolution. Papadopoulos cannot ignore these extreme right-wing elements because they are close to the armed forces, the backbone of the regime. So far, the prime minister's maneuvering has avoided a full-blown confrontation with them, but his continued success is uncertain.

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Romania: The leadership has called for a crack-down on antisocial elements.

In a recent speech to members of the security, police, and justice apparatus, party chief Ceausescu called for repressive measures against "hooliganism," embezzlement, and other deviations from socialist norms. Ceausescu's attack was aimed particularly at youth. Young people have been the object of a concerted campaign designed to force them to abandon the trappings of "hippyism" and go to work.

His concern over embezzlement probably stems from recent revelations of financial misdeeds among government officials, who were promptly dismissed. In another reflection of Romanian sensitivity to possible Soviet subversion, Ceausescu called for "ruthless" actions by the security organs against those who aid "certain foreign circles" by trying to steal secret documents.

Under Ceausescu's leadership the state security and justice organs have been deprived of much of their former arbitrary power, and new penal and criminal procedure codes have ensured protection of the ordinary citizens' civil rights. In his speech, however, Ceausescu charged that the security organs have misinterpreted these changes. For fear of being accused of abuses and illegalities, he said, they have failed to carry out their duties.

His call for more rigorous prosecution may signal a renewed campaign against immorality, criminality, and simple indolence, but he is not likely to allow the police to revert to the brutal methods of the Stalinist era.

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[Dominican Republic: Former president Bosch is tentatively scheduled to return today and his prospective arrival is adding to the unsettled political situation.

Bosch, the leader of the major opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party, was slated to end three years of self-imposed exile and fly from Curacao yesterday, but his arrival was postponed.

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One person was reportedly killed and several wounded when confused shooting broke out between army troops and the crowds attracted by Bosch's pending arrival, and the government is likely to tighten security measures further today. Whether the mercurial Bosch is still intent on returning, however, is unknown; he has reneged on similar plans in the past.

Negotiations between President Balaguer and the opposition parties threatening a boycott of the elections scheduled for 16 May are at a near standstill. Balaguer has, however, extended his offer to relinquish the presidency for 30 days to 36 days and the disputants may be inching closer to a solution.

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Caribbean: Dissension at the Sixth Caribbean Commonwealth Summit Conference in Jamaica will probably make agreement on regional problems difficult. The US Embassy in Jamaica reports that there are divergent views among the delegates and that Prime Minister Burnham of Guyana and others are grandstanding. Burnham's speeches have been devoted to attacks against foreign influence in the Caribbean and exhortations to the delegates to push for economic independence.

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[redacted] the US was also criticized. The absence of Trinidad's influential Eric Williams, who has black power problems at home, makes it even more unlikely that major decisions will be reached at the conference.

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Trinidad-Tobago: The government may take stronger measures to quell the continued black power dissidence. Following the call-up of reserve police and military forces over the weekend, the administration is rumored to be considering the declaration of a state of emergency. Some of the radicals, caught up in their own revolutionary fervor, seem increasingly bent on provoking a clash with security forces. Further protests are planned for this weekend. Moreover, the trials of several of the radical leaders arrested during the February disturbances will resume Monday and could spark further unrest.

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